

SUNDAY NATION

Kiwis leading nuke moves

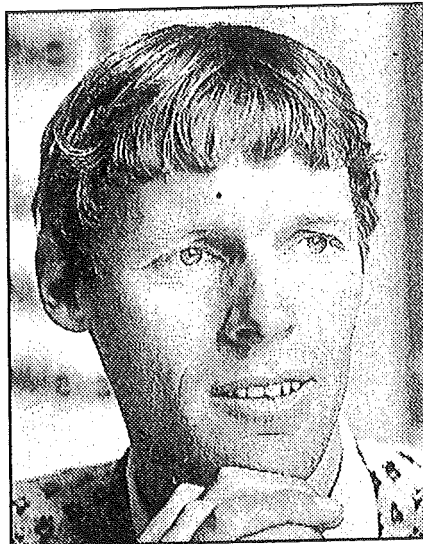
New Zealand looks set to lead the world full circle — from Ernest Rutherford's suggestion of the existence of the atomic nucleus in 1906 to a global convention for the elimination of nuclear weapons in 1995, 50 years after Hiroshima.

Tauranga-born peace worker Alyn Ware is at the centre of the international project started by retired Christchurch magistrate Harold Evans, for the World Court to rule on the legal status of nuclear weapons.

Back home for a few days from his New York base where he is director of the project's lawyers' committee on nuclear policy, Ware says a "large number" of countries in the UN are now prepared to vote in the general assembly for a ruling on the legality of "the use and threat to use" nuclear weapons.

"We've been lobbying steadily since last year and we have a large bloc of support and when countries move in a bloc, particularly on a disarmament resolution on the general assembly agenda, it usually gets passed."

Ware expects the matter to go to the World Court shortly after and a final "favourable" decision



ALYN WARE . . . support

to be handed down in 1995.

Ware and the project workers in New York have already had one victory this year. In May the World Health Organisation resolved to ask the World Court the question, "Considering the health and environmental effects of nuclear weapons, would the use of nuclear weapons by a state in wartime violate its responsibilities under international law?"

"That was an enormous break through getting the matter to the

World Court because citizens' groups like ourselves, even though we are internationally representative, are not able to get to the court because it is only open to states or organs of the UN itself.

"That's why we originally chose WHO and the general assembly to work through."

Ware says the project proper began when Evans succeeded in getting the International Lawyers Against Nuclear Arms behind him and New Zealand's Dr Robin Briant and Erich Geiringer convinced the international physicians' body to do the same.

"The 100-year-old Nobel Prize-winning International Peace Bureau joined and the three groups launched the project last year. Since then I've been working for the project fulltime in New York and Geneva."

Ware says he realises nuclear nations do not need to abide by the World Court decision should it outlaw the use and threat of the weapons, but because that will be a "supreme interpretation" from an international legal body, nations will have a great deal of difficulty in ignoring it.